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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 003315

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - MINIMIZE PARA 11 ADDED

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [EAID](#) [SU](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH FIRMLY SUPPORT U.S. POSITION ON DARFUR
PEACE AGREEMENT

REF: A. STATE 77588

[1](#)B. PARIS 3182

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Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Bruce Turner, for reasons 1.4
(b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The GOF supports completely the U.S. position set forth in ref A, MFA Sudan deskoff Jeremie Robert said on May 17. France will encourage non-signatories to the Darfur Peace Agreement to sign it, and believes that Abdulwahid Al-Nur can be persuaded to sign the agreement. If not, he risks losing the support of some of his faction's members who have begun to express interest in joining the peace process. The French are considering providing limited financial support to Abdurahman Moussa in his efforts to return to Darfur to build grassroots support for the agreement. France will support the imposition of sanctions against those unwilling to sign the agreement, although Khalil Ibrahim's status as a political refugee in France may complicate efforts to enforce sanctions against him. The GOF also supports the creation of a UN mission for Darfur in the wake of UNSC Resolution 1679, and believes the Darfur Peace Agreement may have a positive effect on Chad and on Chad-Sudan relations. France believes it important to offer some assistance to rebel factions that support the DPA, if only to prevent them from pillaging and abusing civilians in order to feed and provide for themselves. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) In the absence of MFA DAS-equivalent Helene Le Gal (in London), we met at her direction with Sudan deskoff Jeremie Robert on May 17, after having provided Le Gal with ref A points the previous day. Robert said that France was in strong agreement with the USG position expressed in ref A points. Although acknowledging that France had less influence than the U.S. concerning Darfur, Robert said that France would do its best to encourage those who had refused to sign the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) to do so. Robert said that the AU's PSC meeting on May 15 had been a good one, which would maintain momentum generated by the DPA itself.

[1](#)3. (C) France would exert such pressure as it could to encourage Abdulwahid Al-Nur to sign the agreement, Robert said. Elaborating on GOF analysis reported in ref B, Robert said that France had received conflicting indications about Abdulwahid Al-Nur's intentions. There were some signs that he might be amenable to signing the DPA, but other signs indicating that he would remain recalcitrant. Robert mentioned that France was considering approaching Eritrea and

Libya and asking them to try to influence Abdulwahid Al-Nur.

¶4. (C) Robert said it was also possible that Abdulwahid Al-Nur would undermine himself through his increasingly erratic and egocentric behavior, an example of which was his insistence that Sudan VP Taha name Abdulwahid Al-Nur to a prominent position in Khartoum. Moreover, Abdulwahid Al-Nur's hard-line position, along with his behavior, risked alienating elements of his own movement possibly interested in joining the DPA. Robert thus believed that it was possible to chip away at Abdulwahid Al-Nur's support, and perhaps even persuade him to sign the DPA.

¶5. (C) The French held Abdurahman Moussa in high regard, Robert said, because of his intention to return to Darfur to build grassroots support for the DPA, and because of his "ego-less" approach to wanting to contribute positively to the peace process. Abdurahman Moussa had recently asked the GOF for funding to help his campaign, and the GOF was considering ways to support him. Abdurahman Moussa had requested "assistance on the order of 30,000-100,000 USD," to be used for such items as airplane tickets to enable him and his associates to travel in the region. Although Robert said that France had not yet committed to helping him, it would likely try to find ways to do so -- "that's the kind of money we can always scrape up from one account or another," he remarked.

¶6. (C) If recalcitrant parties such as Abdulwahid Al-Nur and Khalil Ibrahim continued to refuse to sign the DPA, Robert said that France would have no problem in joining to impose sanctions against them. Robert noted, however, that Khalil Ibrahim was a more difficult case in that he enjoyed political refugee status in France, which enabled him to travel on a type of document that France "could not just seize or revoke." Nonetheless, Robert said that France would support a sanctions program directed at those who did not sign the DPA.

¶7. (C) Robert said the GOF firmly supported UNSC 1679

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concerning peacekeeping issues and was glad that a calendar of sorts was beginning to take shape, with a UN/AU study group ready to begin its work, to be followed by a UNSYG recommendation. This would allow all concerned parties to move toward establishing a UN mission for Darfur. Robert thought that Khartoum would eventually accept a UN mission, despite its continued rhetoric to the contrary. He cited several instances where Khartoum had offered initial resistance and then agreed at a later point, and he believed that it was "inevitable that they will agree to the UN mission now that the DPA has been signed."

¶8. (C) Robert was optimistic that the DPA and subsequent events would have a positive effect on Chad and on Chad-Sudan relations, although he cautioned that, given the complex relationships among the parties and frequently shifting alliances -- "when it comes to Chad and Sudan, the old axiom that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' doesn't really apply" -- it was by no means certain that the DPA would ease Chad-Sudanese tensions or intra-Chad and intra-Sudan tensions. The DPA offered at least a good chance that improvement in these areas could take place.

¶9. (C) Robert said the GOF considered one other item a priority -- the need to provide some material support (e.g., food, shelter) to rebel factions that had signed the DPA. They needed to be provided some basics, if only to discourage them from taking what they needed by pillaging innocent civilians. Robert indicated that France was considering ways to help in this area.

¶10. (C) COMMENT: Robert's support for the U.S. position on the DPA and follow-on steps was markedly unequivocal and direct. He said several times "your approach is a good one"

and, when asked about specific ref A points, said that he could find "nothing worth quibbling over." END COMMENT.

¶11. (U) MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

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Stapleton